

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way

## 5 A Day and Cooking and Tasting Activities



# 5 A Day the Preschool Way

## How to do a 5 A Day Tasting Party



The goal of nutrition education is to maintain or improve children's healthful eating practices. The most effective way to do that is to have tasting experiences or parties. The word party is used because it adds a festive or fun attitude to an experience children should enjoy. Eating should be viewed as a fun activity.

Young children's attitudes about foods can be easily influenced by either visual or verbal disapproval from the teacher or adults. Teachers should not introduce a food they do not like; children will sense the attitude and may not even try a food. Teachers need to encourage children to try new and different foods for their current and future health. The key word is encourage!

### Encourage:

- **the attitude that eating is FUN!**
  - **trying new and different foods**
  - **eating foods from each pyramid group every day**
  - **eating different foods within each group**
  - **taking one bite (not cleaning your plate)**
  - **the attitude that good health is each child's choice**
- Children seldom refuse to eat food they have helped prepare. Allow them to assist with the food preparation as much as possible.
  - Eating habits are learned; they are not instinctive. Tasting new foods is the best way to expand a child's appreciation for a variety of foods.
  - Do not force children to participate. Forcing only creates a larger problem later. Do not overwhelm children with servings that are too large. The goal is to take one bite, not clean your plate.

### Using the Taste-Test Chart

Invite children to use My ***Taste-Test Chart*** to show their preferences and to help them feel in control of what fruits and vegetables they sample. Make multiple copies of the blank chart, and then fill in the names of different fruits and vegetables for each tasting party. Add the names, then copy the chart for each child.

Try the following ideas in planning your tasting party. This party could be done in a carnival atmosphere in a common area with different stations set up, each doing a different activity, or choose one activity to do in the classroom.

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## How to do a 5 A Day Tasting Party (continued)

- Prepare trays with some uncommon fruits and vegetables such as jicama, starfruit, passion fruit, broccoli and cauliflower. Cut the produce into sample sizes.
- Tell students to wash their hands before sampling the foods. Distribute one of each of the samples to each student, identifying the fruit or vegetable. Lead a discussion about the foods students liked by asking the following or similar questions:
  - What fruits and vegetables do you like?
  - Are there some fruits and vegetables you have not tried?
  - Why have you not tried them?
- You may want to offer some low-fat dip. After the students have tasted the foods; ask the ones who liked certain foods to raise their hands. Allow students to take turns describing what they liked about the foods.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Celebrate Healthy Eating™ series

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way

## My Taste-Test Chart



Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Food to taste	I tasted it	I am not sure	I will not taste it now
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Have I tasted these fruits and vegetables before? (Circle one)

All

Some

None

Why do I like fruits and vegetables? (Write child's comments below:)

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To the Teacher:

Fill in the "Food to Taste" column with the names of five fruits and vegetables children can try. For each food, help the child fill in the appropriate column with a symbol, such as a face or a check (✓), to show the child's willingness to taste it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Celebrate Healthy Eating™ series

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## All Apples Are Not Alike

The sheet on the following page has instructions for several apple activities. The activities are part of the Celebrate Healthy Eating™ series available at [www.celebratehealthyeating.org](http://www.celebratehealthyeating.org).

Similar activities can be planned using fruits or vegetables that come in a number of varieties. You may decide to plan an activity using pears, squash or beans. Whatever fruit or vegetables you choose, approach it in a positive way to encourage children to try new foods.



## All Apples Are Not Alike

Many fruits and vegetables, such as apples, squash, beans, peas, and pears, come in different varieties.

And when foods are processed—cooked, baked, dried, or pressed—they have different tastes and textures. Help children explore and compare fresh apples and apple products with these taste tests.

### Choose Your Color: Red, Green, Yellow

You will need enough red apples (such as Rome, Red Delicious, Macintosh), green apples (Granny Smith), and yellow apples (Yellow Delicious) for each child to have a small sample.

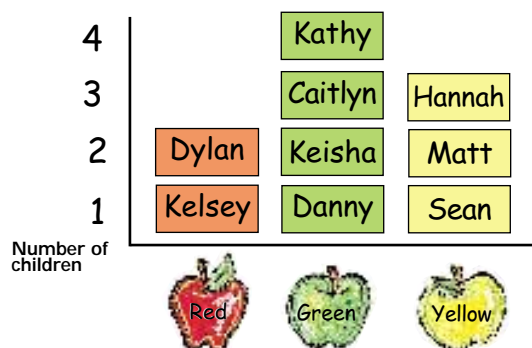
- Set out the uncut apples. Lead children in comparing them for similarities (they are all apples) and differences (color, shape, size).
- Have children wash their hands and assist in washing the apples. An adult can peel and cut up the apples into small, bite-size pieces. It's best to keep the peel on so that children can distinguish the apples by color.
- Offer children a chance to try each type of apple, but don't push reluctant tasters to sample all three. *Remember to always watch children as they eat. Young children are at risk of choking on food.*
- Record children's preferences on a chart, or build a graph like the one below by giving each child a square of paper—red, green, or yellow—to place in the appropriate column. Discuss the graph. Which color apple did most children pick?

### Choose Your Favorite Apple Food



For a second taste test, compare apple products, such as apple juice, applesauce, and apple muffins. Conduct the test the same way you did the fresh apple comparison, creating an "Our Favorite Apple Food" chart or graph. Discuss how these products are different—one is a liquid, one a sauce, and one a bread—and what happens to the apples to create each food (they are squeezed to make juice, cooked to make applesauce, and mixed with flour, sugar, eggs, and spices and then baked to make muffins).

OUR FAVORITE APPLE CHART



# 5 A Day the Preschool Way

## Making Bunny Salad



### Materials Needed

- Canned pears or peeled fresh pear (1 small half per child)
- Small carrot sticks for ears/bunny food (3 per child)
- Small lettuce leaves for bunny grass (1 per child)
- Miniature marshmallows for bunny tail (1 per child)
- Raisin for bunny eyes (2 per child)
- Small plates, spoons, napkins (1 each for each child)
- Whole wheat crackers (3 - 4 per child)

### Directions

1. All wash hands.
2. Teacher assembles all ingredients and utensils (pears, carrots, lettuce, marshmallow, raisins).
3. Teacher distributes ingredients to each child, or teacher places lettuce and pear on each plate.
4. Children build bunny salad.
5. Serve crackers, eat and enjoy!

*Adapted from Arizona 5 A Day materials*

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## Build a Butterfly Salad

The following page has instructions for making a Butterfly Salad. This can be found in pdf format at [www.celebratehealthyeating.org](http://www.celebratehealthyeating.org).

Children are often more willing to try foods they've had a hand in making, so plan cooking experiences using fruits and vegetables. For a spring salad that butterfly enthusiasts are sure to enjoy, introduce the "Build a Butterfly Salad" sheet. Review the five pictures with children and point out that each explains a step in creating their edible butterfly.

To prepare, first ask children to wash their hands. They can help wash the fresh vegetables (use lettuce from your own garden, if possible). An adult will need to cut the celery into sticks for the insect body and red peppers into strips for antennae. Use pineapple canned in its own juices. Set out the raisins and low-fat yogurt, are you're ready to start.

Substitute any fruits and vegetable children prefer. Just as there are different kinds of butterflies, children can try many versions of butterfly salad. Enlist their help in thinking of alternative. For example, an all-fruit butterfly may be made with cottage cheese as a base, slices of kiwi arranged to look like wings, a row of blueberries to form the body, and two apple slices for antennae.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Celebrate Healthy Eating™ series





# Build a Butterfly Salad

Follow the pictures to make your own butterfly salad to eat!



You need:



plate



lettuce



pineapple ring halves



celery stick



flavored yogurt



raisins



red pepper



- 1 Put a lettuce leaf on a plate.



- 2 Use two pineapple rings for wings and a celery stick for the body.



- 3 Add a scoop of yogurt to fill in each wing.



- 4 Place three raisins on each wing.



- 5 Finish with two strips of red pepper for antennae. Enjoy!

## NOTE TO TEACHER:

Be sure to have children wash their hands before handling food. You can substitute any of the ingredients for others that children prefer (such as making an all-fruit or all-vegetable butterfly salad). Always watch children during meals and snacks. Young children, ages 2 to 3 especially, are at risk of choking on food.

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way

## Kid-Friendly Recipes



The following sheet has a variety of kid-friendly recipes from the Dannon Celebrate Healthy Eating™ curriculum.



## Kid Friendly Recipes

Young children are often more willing to taste new foods when they have a part in preparing them. Let your child use a plastic knife to help cut up soft fruits and vegetables. With other recipes, your child can be the chief mixer. And then there's always cleanup!

### Pumpkin Dip

Here's a tasty dip for graham crackers that's nutritious and delicious. Your child may also like to eat it as pudding.

#### YOU NEED:

- 1 tablespoon canned pumpkin
- 1/3 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 teaspoon orange juice concentrate (use 100% juice for more nutrients)
- Pinch of cinnamon (optional)
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup (optional)
- Graham crackers for dipping



Mix all ingredients well. Serve cold or warm. (To warm, microwave for about 30 seconds and stir before serving.)

### Seeds and Bean Salsa

Did you know that corn kernels are actually seeds? Invite your child to try a new way to eat corn and beans.

#### YOU NEED:

- 1/2 cup cooked corn kernels, chilled
  - 1/2 cup cooked black beans, rinsed very well and chilled
  - 1 tablespoon Italian dressing
- Mix the ingredients together. Serve as a dip with corn chips.

### Ambrosia Salad

Using kiwi and oranges in this variation on a familiar salad offers lots of Vitamin C. You can substitute green grapes, but red are prettier.

#### YOU NEED:

- 1 kiwi, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 orange, peeled, separated into wedges, and seeds removed
- 10 red grapes (seedless or discard as many seeds as possible)
- 2 tablespoons low-fat strawberry-banana yogurt
- Flaked coconut (optional)



In a bowl, cut the kiwi slices into quarters, orange wedges into small pieces, and grapes in half. Carefully mix in yogurt. Sprinkle with a little coconut if your child likes, then serve.

### Parsnips With Pizzazz

If your child has shied away from parsnips, offer them again with these yummy fixings.

#### YOU NEED:

- 4 boiled parsnips (should be soft)
  - 1 tablespoon margarine
  - 1 tablespoon light brown sugar or honey
  - 1/4 teaspoon prepared mustard
- Quarter the parsnips and place in a buttered one-quart dish. Dot with margarine. Mix the sugar or honey and mustard and spoon over the parsnips. Bake in a preheated 400°F oven for about 20 minutes or until parsnips are glazed and browned. Cool slightly before serving.

### Cobbler Gobbler Crunch

Encouraging your child to eat two servings of fruit a day won't be hard when you offer this snack or dessert as one choice.

#### YOU NEED:

- 1 can peaches, pears, apricots, plums, or mandarin oranges (choose canned fruit in its own juice if available)
  - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
  - 2 tablespoons low-fat granola or other crunchy, low-sugar cereal
  - 2 tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
- Drain the fruit and slice into a bowl. Sprinkle on cinnamon. Top with granola and yogurt, then serve.



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## Five Tasty 5 A Day Recipes



### Four-Fruit Salad

- 1 cup seedless grapes
- 1 cup orange segments
- 1 large apple, cut-up
- 1 large pear, cut-up

Toss all ingredients together.

This is an official 5 A Day recipe.

### Carrot Raisin Salad

- 4 medium carrots, shredded
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ¼ cup raisins
- juice of 1 lemon

In a medium bowl, thoroughly mix carrots, raisins, sugar and lemon. Serve chilled.

This is an official 5 A Day recipe.

### Sweet Potato Salad

- 1 pound orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, cooked, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 cup green peas, cooked
- ¼ cup sliced green pepper
- ¼ cup diced red onion
- 1 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- black pepper to taste
- 1 tsp. dried oregano

Place cut sweet potatoes in a serving bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well. Serve immediately or chill for later use.

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## Five Tasty 5 A Day Recipes (continued)



### Five-Fruit Salad

- ½ cup orange juice
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup watermelon, cubed
- 1 banana, peeled and sliced
- 1 peach or nectarine, pitted and cubed

Pour juice over fruits and refrigerate until cold, up to 24 hours.

### Microwave Maple-Filled Pears

- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup maple-flavored syrup
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup chopped nuts
- ½ tsp. lemon peel
- 3 fresh large pears, pared, halved and cored

Combine raisins, nuts, syrup, lemon peel and cinnamon; set aside. Arrange pears, cut-side down, in microwave-safe baking dish. Cover with plastic wrap. Microwave at high 5 minutes. Turn pears over and spoon maple mixture into center of each pear. Microwave, covered, at high 3 to 4 minutes longer or until pears are tender.

Recipes adapted from Communicating Food for Health, July/August 2000 and <http://www.5aday.gov/index-recipe.shtml>